1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

Persians belong, appears to have a greater charm for the Kúrdish mountaineers than the feminine notion of an absolute and personal Allah, which is the dominant idea of the tenets held by the *Sheni*, or "Orthodox" Osmanlis. The Dervish Orders, who constitute the mystics of Islam, are, consequently, extremely popular with the Kúrds, and the veneration of the women for the Sheikhs, or *pirs*, as they are called, whether living or dead, exceeds, if possible, that entertained for them by the Turkish women. For, indifferent as the Kúrds may be to the dogmas of Islam, they, like all highlanders, are exceedingly superstitious, and firmly believe in all the occult and spiritual powers laid claim to by the Dervish Sheikhs.

The saint whom the Kúrds hold in the highest reverence is the deceased Sheikh, Khaled *el* Sulimaniah, whom they consider equal to Abdul Kadr *el* Ghilán,[1] if not to the Prophet Mohammed himself, and deem it profanation to speak of by any other title than that of *Hazreti Mevlána*—"Our Lord the Prophet." This Kúrdish *pir*, whose sayings his countrymen dignify by the name of *hikáis*,[2] belonged to the Nakshibendi Dervishes, a "contemplative" Order famed for the deep mystic piety of its members, and which has produced many saints eminent in the Moslem world. To the tombs of dead, or the *tekkés*[3] of living, Dervishes, the Kúrdish

[1] A famous dervish who lived in the twelfth century, and founded the Order of the Kadris. Wonderful stories are told of the supernatural powers possessed by this Sheikh, some of which may be found in *The Dervishes*, by J. P. Brown.

[2] The name given by Moslems to the sayings or "table talk" of Mohammed.

[3] The monasteries and temples in which the Dervishes recite and hold their services.

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
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778
756 women resort for the cure of every ailment, physical or moral.

754 Is a child ailing, it is carried by its anxious mother
755 to the most eminent Sheikh within reach, who cures it by imposition, not of hands, but of feet, by breathing on it with his holy breath, or by hanging some sacred
[777] charm around its little neck. The first-named remedy may sound startling, but is actually applied, as I can vouch from personal observation.[1] The baby is laid on its back, and the Sheikh, laying his hands on the shoulders of two of his disciples who stand on either side, places his feet and rests his entire weight for a few seconds on the child's body. The Dervishes also
757 expound dreams, read the future, and furnish every other species of occult information of which their clients may stand in need.

776 Some Christian saints belonging to the Armenian calendar are also highly revered by the Kürdish tribesmen. Of these perhaps Surp Serkis, or St. Sergius, is the one whose aid is most frequently sought. Kürdish warriors, when about to enter on a campaign, resort
[781] to his tomb, and seek to enlist his favour and pro-
778 tection by there sacrificing a ram and lighting wax tapers.

776 The strange and widespread Oriental myth of Khidhr-Elias, in his double character of sea and land deity, is also current among the Kürds, with whom he is Khidhr on land and Elias on the sea, and by whom he is invoked as a kind of guardian angel.

[1] I witnessed this strange practice at Sulaimán, after a service in the záwiah of the Merkeel, or "dancing" Dervishes, as they are commonly called by Europeans.

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

The affair got wind, and it was everywhere reported that Sittir of Begirtv had found a treasure. The news finally reached the ears of the Pasha of Van, who sent for him and shut him up in the city prison, where he lay some time. He confessed the truth, and obtained his liberty only at the price of a quantity of gold, which he gave to the Pasha of Van. In short, Sittir had to scatter his gold in all directions. 539

Sensible folks will, perhaps, doubt the truth of this story. It is, however, firmly believed in these districts, and often related, and, what is more, the descendants of Sittir still live at Begirtv in great prosperity. They have lands, mills, many a yoke of oxen and fine flocks, and they keep open house. One might say that it is a *teklid*,[1] for every one receives hospitality in this Armenian house; Moslems even are never repulsed, but welcomed with every mark of attention. From that time Sittir became well known among the Kürds, who made great friends with him, and brought him presents of sheep. It sometimes happens that they are at feud with the inhabitants of Begirtv, and commit robberies and depredations in that town, but they always spare the house of Sittir, saying that it is as sacred as a *teklid*, and that not even an indiscreet glance must enter it. [579 628 778]

The following curious story has been preserved by the late Mr. Rich,[2] who took it down literally from the lips of the narrator, a tribesman of the Bebbeha of Dariahmana, without, as he says, adding to or 538 114

[1] Turkish monastery, where hospitality is generally exercised.
[2] *Narrative, &c.*, vol. i. p. 290.

that the number of times the name of the deity is enumerated indicates the piety of the population. With the Prophet it is quite different, for one never hears him spoken of irreverently or in a secular context. It is not customary to call him by name, but rather al-Rasul, "the Apostle," or al-Nabi, "the Prophet," and either the speaker or someone else present adds, Sala Ellahu 'alaihi wa salam, "the prayer (blessing) of God upon him and the peace," whenever he is mentioned. The Quran is held in similar respect. The volume must never be handled with levity, or left uncovered when not in use. An official told how his servant removed his copy of the Quran from the room in which he was drinking arrack, in some way personifying the book, in which the use of alcoholic beverages is forbidden, as God himself. Metal cases or cloth envelopes, usually green in color, are used to enclose it, or else it is tied up in a scarf or handkerchief.

The great mosque, Jame'a al-Kabir, in Rowandus is a large, square building of rubble on the central square of the bazar or mercantile area, its rear wall facing the qibla, the direction of Mecca, to which prayer is addressed. The building on its front is raised about six feet above the square and one reaches its porch by a series of roughly cut stone stairs. The roof is of mud rolled on bundles of poles and twigs, and covers the porch as well as the main room and the annex. This is to the right of the main door, a small door of the room opening on the porch and large unglassed windows overlooking the square. It is used for

reading, meditation, and conversation, and the chief mulla or priest is usually found there. There is no furniture in this room and its floor is covered with carpets. Mattresses run along the sides on which visitors seat themselves cross-legged, and the interior wall contains niches which serve as shelves for a large number of tattered copies of the Quran and other devotional works, the only public library in the town. One must remove his shoes before entering this annex or the main room of the mosque. The latter room because of its large size, has four tree trunks stripped of their bark set up at four points around its center to serve as columns for the support of the roof, crotches of the trunks holding the heavier rafters. The walls are plastered and whitewashed, and the ceiling is unfinished. The floor is covered with a number of carpets and mats. In the center of the rear wall is a plain, pointed niche, the mihrab, which indicates the direction of prayer. To the right of this niche is the minbar, the "pulpit," in this case a crudely-made set of wide wooden steps, something like a short ladder, leading up the rear wall about three feet from the floor. At the hours of prayer the mulla takes his place facing the mihrab or niche, and those assembled in the mosque form ranks behind him and imitate his intonations and gestures. On Fridays, if a sermon is called for, the mulla ascends one or two steps of the minbar, and stands facing the congregation to speak. This main room has no windows and the door is open. Outside there is a flight of stone steps leading to the roof from

fasted for you and you should come to my help." 773
Out of the night a man appeared who asked me my 776
difficulty. He helped me get the mule to his
feet and reload the rice. The two of us were walking
along together, talking, and suddenly I discovered
I was alone. Khidir Elyas lived long ago and God
gave him such power to do good that he disappeared.
This is why people ask his help while he is gone.
When Jesus will come again with Ahmed the Mahdi,
Khidir Elyas must be with them, for otherwise they
cannot come.

Persons in Rowandus who choose to do so fast "for Khidir 785
Elyas" for three days in the fall. Between sunrise and 782
sunset they do not allow themselves food, drink, or tobacco.
Others distribute gifts of food or clothing to the poor. [735]
Housewives make a sweet called Helarest Khidir Elyas [262]
which is exchanged between households at this time. [431]
exact dates of the observance could not be obtained, save
that it "came just before winter." This interesting [183]
custom does not have the sanction of the mullas and the
priests in the town, and is not followed by all.

With the Serrag and Khidir Elyas observances, the 792
"official" faith of Islam has been left behind, and the
next subject of popular religion which requires considera-
tion is the matter of the shaykh or holy man. Occasionally,
this title is aristocratic and inherited in the male line,
but it is most often accorded to persons who, because of
their piety and the miraculous power they seem to enjoy,
have acquired widespread reputations. Such as these can be
powerful chieftains, noted for their justice, or the most
humble of commoners. They are reputed to have the ability to
effect miracles during their lifetimes, and this power
continues to exist in their graves after death. Many of [778]

these graves become shrines in time, and the object of pilgrimage from nearby villages. The typical indication of a shrine is either a low, quadrilateral, rubble wall about the grave or a cairn of stones. Those who visit the shrine with some purpose characteristically tie a piece of white rag on the end of a pole and lean the pole against the inner surface of the wall. Some shrines have bundles of these crude banners standing in them. The meaning of the rag is variable. In some cases the visitor will return and reclaim it, incorporating it in a charm, while in others it is simply the sign of a vow that the supplicant, if the shaykh buried there will bring about the desired favor, will sacrifice so many animals or give so much money to the poor. The most auspicious days, it might be noted, to visit a shrine are Wednesdays and Thursdays. The six most noted shrines near the town of Rowandus are as follows:

1. Shaykh Piri Mewlli near the village of Hesi Kah. Shaykh Piri Mewlli is said to have lived about two hundred years ago, "in the time of Mir Pasha."

2. Shaykh Se'idi Galkarak near the village of Karak. The shrine is said to be very old, dating perhaps from the time of the Islamic conquest.

3. Shaykh Saran in the village of Saran itself. Shaykh Saran is said to have died about fifty years ago.

4. Shaykh Wes Shaykhan on the road to Kawlak. "No one knows how old it is, but it is very ancient."

5. Shaykh Mohammed or Shaykh Malik, the second most famous shrine in the district, at Majji Saran.

6. Shaweal Shaykh Mohammed or Shaweal Mala, "The shepherd of Shaykh Mohammed," near the shrine of

Shaykh Muhammdi at Hajji Umran. This is the most famous of the group and is believed to effect miraculous cures. It is said that the Shepherd used to take out the sheep of Shaykh Muhammd each day. The pasturage was not good, and Shaykh Muhammad wondered why his sheep were so fat and healthy. One day he concealed himself and was amazed to see the Shepherd fly off through the air, with the sheep flying behind him in a line, to some rich, faroff mountain meadow. Thus Shaykh Muhammad learned of the power of this man, and asked the people to visit the Shepherd's grave before his own. A merchant in Rowanduz, one 'Abd al-Qattar, claimed to have cured an ailment which he described as "sand in the urine" by drinking water obtained near this shrine.

Some of these shrines may be of considerable antiquity, and an indication of this is the fact that they are in most cases associated with trees. In a region which has almost been denuded of heavier timber, it is striking to find a lone oak on some barren hillside with the grave of a holy man beneath its branches. The townspeople of Rowanduz were unable to comment on this association, but investigation among the villagers might reveal some interesting views. It seems quite clear, however, that a pagan survival is represented here, a complex dating from a time in which some religious significance was attached to trees or groves. It might be remarked that cutting down such a tree, however great the need for wood, was believed to bring the greatest catastrophe. People visit these shrines for a variety of reasons, those suffering from some "incurable" malady, women who wish a male child, or men who believe themselves hampered by misfortune. The magical power is the person of the holy man, alive or dead, is termed berakh

(Arabic, "blessing"), and provides a good example of what is classified as mana in most standard works on primitive religion, an amorphous supernatural power which has a seat in certain persons or objects from which it may be transmitted. 778

The power of these holy men, unless they themselves are disturbed in some way, is wholly benevolent. The people of Rowanduz also believe in jinni (the same noun as in Arabic), spirits who, in contrast, characteristically cause great harm. There does not appear to be much thought about ghosts. No one in Rowanduz knew of a house "haunted" by the spirit of a dead man, and equated the European notion of "ghost" with that of the jinni. The jinni, for example, might take possession of a building and drive its inhabitants out. They are held to be evil spirits who constitute a separate order of creation, like the birds or the animals, and are not necessarily related to mankind. At night one must never pour hot water out of the door without first saying, "In the name of God." Although there are no cats in Rowanduz, it was said that one must never kill such an animal, because "the jinni is born in a cat and might harm one." When a boy is out walking in the wild countryside, it is believed that a voice often calls out to him, "asking him to come and meet the father," that is, the parent of the jinni who is the fallen Angel Eblis of Islamic demonology. If the boy is foolish and leaves his path as directed, the jinni throws him from 776 [775] [782] [825]

4 Hansen E-5 (1997) 1961 MA11 Hard MA11

CHAPTER V

WOMAN'S PLACE IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF ISLAM

As we know, the five pillars of Islam are: The confession of faith, the five daily salutes of Allah, generally known as the five daily "prayers", the duty to give alms, the fast in the 9th month, and the pilgrimage to Mecca undertaken in the 12th month of the Muslim lunar year[1].

Whereas the confession of faith is not dealt with in the law books of Islam, the other four pillars, complied with the necessary ritual purity when reciting the daily prayers, form the five religious acts or pious exercises that comprise the actual cult of Islam.

What place has this cult in the life of the Kurdish woman?

With the synopsis of Paradise, houris, awaiting the faithful in Paradise—an idea that only appeared at the beginning of Mohammed's revelations[2] and is later dropped[3]—the Islamic woman, in our Western conception, is to some extent excluded from the religious life of Islam. The same impression is gained by a visit to a mosque. Whereas in our Western culture, most of the congregation that assembles in church on Sunday—the only day devoted by us to religion—are women, few women are seen in Islam's cross-topped, canopied, silent house of prayer, the mosque. When women go there it is only within a definite area barred by a low railing at the far end of the building.

If without access to a Muslim home, one therefore gains the impression that in Islam a life of piety is a matter for the men, yet it is only on the Friday midday prayer that men congregate in the mosque to any great extent. The men who visit the mosque daily and at several of the five daily prayer times, are those who in their homes or at their places of work have insufficient room and quiet to pray and to perform the prior, ordained ritual washing. Most other men say their prayers in their homes, their families, or at their place of business[4]. Kurdish women would found to possess a warm and living interest in their religion, but their piety is enveloped within the home.

Among the women of the village schoolmaster in Topzawa, the five daily prayer periods were observed with the utmost devotion.

The midday prayer that begins the day was observed individually—not like the others, in common—by the two adult women in the house and the 17 year old daughter shortly after noon and her up to nine hour later. The prayer rug, *Jahnamâ*, (L. 220cm of goat's wool, rectangular in form, 1.40 x 1.10 m. in size, woven in grey and brown natural-coloured yarn, wedge patterned, was placed on the floor in the three-walled room, the axis of which was orientated towards Mekka. The woman that the

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MAII Hard MAII

722
531
771
256

Fig. 56.
Prayer rug of ass's wool in natural colours. (E. 5295. Tripoli).

loose-hanging ends of their white head veil down on the head with the ends round their necks, so that the veil formed a hood which allowed only the ha es to be seen. If wearing shoes they stepped out of them, and with their bare feet cool on the bare of hair long kirtle, thus hiding their feet. They then loosened their long, wedge-shaped sleeves (the wrist-bar wound round their forearms or hanging down their backs, tied together at the ends, so thatthey fell to the ground over hands and fingers, which were thus also hidden by the costume. When these preparations were concluded, the woman adopted the first position of prayer and commenced or intention of praising God, which constitutes the introduction to the prayer itself. She then read her hands with the palms turned forwards within the arms of the kirtle until they were outsidher ears and announced "God is great"—. She then lowered her hands and, with the right hand gaging the left wrist, recited the opening Sura of the Coran, followed by one or more passages from the holy book. She then bowed forwards from the hips with her hands on the knees, then went down on her knees to perform the double prostration of which the midday prayer comprises four sets, rak, ending in the kneeling position whilst reciting the declaration of faith, the ritual greetings, and turning the head first to the left and then to the right. According to Jaynboll[1], the prayer can be divided to nine positions, the positions 3-8, that is to say six positions, constituting a rak'a, whereas Gibb[2] sees seven position to each rak'a, as he includes the first standing posture and counts one standing position between, or as a beginning of, each rak'a.

The afternoon prayer, like the midday prayer with four rak'a, was usually said on the flat roof about 4 p.m., shortly before sundown.

On the other hand the sunset prayer with only three rak'a, took place down in the three-walled central room at about 8 p.m., as did the evening prayer comprising four rak'a at 9-10 p.m.

normally the ones where the hand-shaped cuffs are tied together and thrown over the shoulder. The three women in question had brought back with them coloured photographs of the holy places, to be hung up in the home, and coloured silk scarves for friends and relatives.

Whereas it was to the embittered effect rather than I met women who had undertaken the ordained pilgrimage, I had in Sukkinami an opportunity to follow in a quiet, reverential and sentimental effect the final days in the twelfth month of the year, which are celebrated in the homes whilst preparations are engaged in the visit and the ceremonies at Mecca connected with it, four days around the 10th dz-l-Hijja namely 9-12, which in 1997 were Monday 6th July to Thursday 11th July.

Pilgrims arrived at Mecca as early as Saturday the 7th (6th July 1997), and by entering the holy area, assumed a state of continence and religious dedication. This is marked by the fact that the men put on two unstitched draperies, a shoulder cloth and a loin cloth. Ehrlund[1] states that the colour for men is white, whilst women's dress on this occasion must be green. Women must not be veiled[2].

On this day the Meccan pilgrim performs the seven-fold encirclement of the *ka'ba*, the sanctuary-shrine, called "Allah's house", originally a heathen sanctuary, the corners of which are orientated to the four cardinal points of the compass. The encirclements, three of which must be performed running, begin at the black stone, the *ka'ba* being to the left, on the side of the heart. The black stone must be kissed or touched. Then comes prayer. The pilgrim now visit the holy spring, *Zamzam*, which gushed forth, a miracle, to refresh Hagar's son Ismail when he was dying of thirst. The seven-fold course between the two low hills, *Safa* and *Marwa* is performed in remembrance of Hagar, who here ran desperately back and forth, calling to heaven for water for her dying son, after she at the command of Sara had been sent into the desert by Abraham. The course is finished by hair-cutting at Marwa, where the women sacrifice the tips of their plaits.

I had an opportunity of seeing whether there was anything in the Sunna in the homeland that corresponded to the days' ceremonies at Mecca. A meal was given in the middle of the day in my interpreter's home, other guests should have been present, but were unable to come. This, however, had no special connexion with the pilgrimage.

The following day, Sunday the 8th (7th July 1997) pilgrims leave Mecca on a four-lane paved ride on the planets' middle which they reach in the evening. It is recommended that the family in the homeland should fast on that day, but this is seldom observed. In my interpreter's home at Sukkinami, as in other homes, a special kind of rice cakes were baked, which were served on the day after, when meals have ended. These cakes were made in spoon-shaped, dried, wooden moulds, greased inside. The dough was pressed into a flat disc, which was laid in the one half of the mould. A filling of chopped almonds, sugar and raisins was laid on top and the dough folded over it before the other half was laid on top like a lid, pressing the cake into shape.

Monday the 9th (8th July 1997) the pilgrims spend in meditation on the plateau. It is recommended that, if not, he observed in the homeland, but it rarely is. In Kandidan it was Children's Day. Children in hundreds swarmed all over Sukkinami in new, miniature editions of adult clothing. The flock of children was composed of boys and girls from 3-4 up to 11 years of age. Beings had been set up on the outskirts of the town. However, the main pilgrims, for which they had been given packet money, was to drive round in open carriages which that day were available for hire by groups of children. A

the door to the bagde he greeted her by reaching out the hand in question, which she kissed, laid it against her brow and passed it along both her cheeks. The name of the hand was not given me but it should be a reproduction of a "holy hand" in Baghdad.

Soothsaying. In addition to the production of amulets, rituals for love and magic, the two sayyids had yet another thing for sale: their skill in soothsaying. Actually, this was the reason why they were allowed to carry among the women of Sheikh Taalbi's house in Tuqtamia. When the two parties had come to terms, a greasy book, kept in a plastic case of the sacred green colour hanging from the waistband of the one, was taken out and opened. One of the women placed her hand on it and pointed to one of the pages. The younger of the two sayyids then gave his interpretation in a droning voice.

Fortune-telling of this kind with the Kurds is referred to by Hütteroth[1], who says: "Les Kurdes aiment beaucoup dire la bonne aventure ("bêt"), et pour cela ils se servent d'un livre spécial ou persane ..... ou l'ouvre à l'evangéliste, en regarde la personne qui s'y trouve le premier et on consulte l'indication que porte un tout chaque page ("bêt" ou "mal") .....". A "prophecy" book of this type has been brought back from Afghanistan (E. 1270). In addition to this soothsaying with the help of a book, opened at hazard, I also observed another form of fortune-telling. During my stay with the Sheikh at Sergelu, the house was visited by another wandering sayyid. Sitting on the floor, surrounded by women, he read their future by palmistry.

Visit to saints' graves. Kurdish women could visit saints' graves[2]. We visited a saint's grave outside Halabja. The saint's last resting place was in a small chapel where a grating cut off the grave itself and the chapel-hung superstructure from visitors. A basin with a spring, lying behind a wall outside the enclosure surrounding the chapel, allowed women to perform the ritual ablution necessary. One of the women that day was hindered on account of her menses (cf. p. 133) from entering the chapel and small plantation, which possessed a sag tree. Close to the saint's grave the women picked up small stones from the ground and attempted to make them stick to the wall on the side of the grave. It was said that if the stone remained sticking the wish one had would be granted, otherwise not.

Saints' graves were found as a part of a mosque in the mountain town of Tawella east to the Iranian frontier. The mosque there, described as a *takyah*[3], was apparently a Sufi religious house[4]. The superstructure over the saints' graves inside were like boxes and were hung with silken rugs[5]. On the one was the turban of the deceased. A young girl kissed the turban[6] respectfully, and accepted some salt wrapped together and handed her[7] by the monk who accompanied us. Over this part of the building, the architecture of which evinced considerable Persian influence in the decorative motifs, the saints' graves were housed under vaulted domes, each of which was ornamented by a hand with outstretched fingers.

Rag trees, rag poles and sacrifices. Two different religious survivals could be seen in Eastlatmi. The one, a tree hung with rags standing outside the chapel-like building that housed the saint's grave outside Halalpa. A similar type of rag tree adorned not only by rags but also by a cow's horn, with a holy hand set up beside it, stood inside the grating that protected a sacred grave. This lay in the middle of a newly-built section on the outskirts of Sukiaassi. Gravestones sticking up here and there between houses showed that the quarter had been raised on what once had been a burial ground.

The other phenomenon: rods each of which bore a single rag like a flag. These rods were planted within a rampart at the burial ground at Tupiaweq, similar rods were placed within an earthworks at the burial ground of the twin village of Kakarsa. No rags were hung on the branches of big trees in the burial ground. A group of rods with rags attached, also behind a low earthworks, marked a grave at the side of the Sukiaassi-Claushavnsal road in the vicinity of Sukiaassi. (No rags on the trees near by.) It appeared to be a matter of two different phenomena: in the one case a tree with branches hung with rags; in the other, rods each bearing a single rag. These rods might be sited under large

Fig. 100. Tree hung with rags outside a saint's grave, Halalpa. The woman wearing sled seal headwork.

Fig. 101. Bush with rags tied on, planted inside stone wall on the burial ground outside Kalema.

trees which have no rags at all. Fraser[36] also distinguishes between these two cases when writing about "bangs of stones" in Kavirondo, which most correspond to Felberg's[37] saints' graves in Loriana; the matter is also referred to by Bishop[38]. Fraser says: "Those who have benefited tear shreds from their shirts or trousers and tie them to the bushes around", but he also speaks of other graves of great men marked with "... a pole with a flag to point out the place to offer a prayer". Maxwell[39] also distinguishes between the two things, but has them be found at the same spot, saying: "... a low stonewall" (that surrounds a holy grave) "on which ... grass and white flags ... On the branches which overhang the shrine rags and scraps of clothing ...". It was said concerning the grave with the rag tree on the building site near Sakalemwi, that it was pregnant women and sick persons who had become ill that hung up the rags as votive offerings. This agrees with Felberg's[40] report that the Lozi "servais les femmes pour qu'elles deviennent fécondes ..." to the holy graves.

Dundas[41] refers to "desire giving trees", though without a grave, and goes on to say: "Perhaps at one time a holy man, or a descendant of the Prophet, sat under such a tree ... it came to be re-

1178 revered .... the crutches .... tie rags and strings to its branches, and at the same time they make a request and take a vow that they will perform some meritorious act if the request is granted."

In order that the promise shall not be rendered valueless, the rags must "first seem contrary" is mentioned by Hasselquist.

1189 1178 Concerning the custom of tying rags to the branches of trees in the vicinity of sheikhs' and saints' graves, Niebuhr[1] writes: "... tout qu'il reste attaché là, ce chiffon est garant des prières du saint", and approaches the idea, also verbally mentioned by Fellberg, that there may be a parallel between these hung-up rags and the waving wooden shavings of the Ainu, indeed, with the idea behind the praying wheels of the Mongols and other Lamaistic Buddhists.

[191] There can be little doubt that the rag tree is an old heathen survival. This view is expressed by Maunsell[2], Ehrenpreis[3], Fellberg[4] and Sonne[5], Ehrenpreis[6], who has seen rag trees in the Taurus Mountains of Turkey, believes that in this custom we find crippled remnants of the ancient resurrection ceremony that is still preserved in its entirety by a few Indian tribes.

1155 1182 The sacrifice of animals as a means of promoting health was referred to by my interpreter. She intended to due course to sacrifice a sheep in order that her 6 year old brother's broken and badly-set leg might improve when she took him next to the doctor, possibly in Baghdad.

[369] [189] [525]

Visible omphalos	+	+		+
Encased omphalos	+	+		+
Holy head	+	+		
Saints' graves			+	+
Rag tree	+			+
Rag poles	+			+

free house and cultivation and from the commoners gifts in accordance with particular services rendered. He usually marries into the community concerned and his heirs will become ordinary members of the village.

It is difficult to assess what, in the mass, is his social position vis-a-vis the chief. He is one of those who has the run of the Agha's Guest House, a right otherwise reserved for strangers and near relatives (khesm), and he is always greeted with formal respect. But beyond that it is difficult to generalize. Ideally no doubt he should use his religious influence to back up the prestige and authority of his patron the Agha, but the facts seem at variance. The Mulla in Bayat was clearly the close confidant and right hand man of the Agha, he dined every evening in the Guest House and was present at all discussions. In Walash on the other hand the Mulla though frequently in the Guest House was treated as a person of small importance and I never saw him in conversation with the Agha. In Dergala again, the Mulla though admittedly a person of importance never came to the Guest House at all during the week of my stay and considerable precautions seemed to be taken that I should not meet him myself independently. In this case there was some definite source of friction between the Agha and the Mulla, though I do not know its nature.

To sum up then it is clear that though the Mulla holds his land and his position as a direct fief from the Agha, his functions are such that he may yet gain considerable independent wealth and influence. In the old days it must have been necessary for the efficient working of the gund that the Mulla and the Agha should be in harmony and work in close collaboration. Under present conditions the attitude of the Mulla appears to be of less significance for the community as a whole

On the other hand it may well be that in the plains where the Agha is frequently an absentee landlord, the social influence of the Mulla is much greater than is at present the case among the hills. May for instance attaches much greater weight to the Mulla's influence than seems justifiable on my own evidence.

The Mosque

In Arabic the word masjid simply signifies a place of prayer. The essential constituents are an open courtyard where the faithful may assemble and a place for ritual ablutions. Historically the covered courtyards, the domes and the minarets are later accretions to the simpler form. In the cool of the hills the open courtyard has been maintained. In most of the villages the mosque is simply paved courtyard of slatestone, surrounded by stone seats with a spring or a fountain in the middle. The slatestone courtyard has the same sanctity as the floor of an ordinary mosque and the visitor must remove his shoes before stepping onto the stone.

8: Leach E-S (1938) 1940 MAII Kurd MAII
Rowanduz

778 his shoes before stepping onto the stone. Here the Bills recite
771 prayers five times a day and those who feel like it join in. The
612 average commoner is very casual about his prayers; many do not pray at
781 all, those who do usually pray only at sunset. The Agha on the other
hand are frequently excessively ostentatious of my acquaintances
Hamid Agha of Dergala in particular made a tremendous fuss about his
prayers and ritual washings. It was interesting to note that he would
often break off in the middle, give orders to his servants, and then go
on again where he left off. While one was here on tonight into his
[891] real religious feelings, I got the impression that it was largely done
for show. There is a definite prestige value attached to being a
devout Mohammedan - it is the characteristics of a gentleman. In the
same way the Agha consistently make a show of being very strict about
the ostentation and veiling of their womenfolk when strangers are present
while commoners, if they bother at all, are lax and casual.

782 A new comer sort of crosses go to the mosque to pray. Each man's
prayers not to be affect his own mosque. The actual practice varies in
different villages depending I fancy upon the example set by the Agha.
Anyway I noticed that there was always a much higher attendance at
prayers when the Agha was there to pray. The corrections seem to be
analogous to those of English churchgoing, there is a much higher
attendance on the Sabbath. The devout Hamid Agha of Dergala for
instance said his prayers at home all the week but on Fridays attended
at the mosque, and most of the village went too.

779 Some villages have a supplementary roofed building which is
36 used as a mosque during the winter, but this is not invariable. In
the Penjwin area and on the plain the mosque is normally a roofed
building with adjacent attendant. In this case prayers are held either
within the covered courtyard or on the roof.

Hogkinson G-3 (no date) [1940] MSS.11 Kurd MSS.11
Kurd

On hills and knolls everywhere in Kurdistan may be found a pile of stones under a tree with pieces of cloth tied about it. It is called a shekhe, and people who are sick come and sit beside it, perhaps leaving a lamb as a sacrificial offering, or a sum of money which can only be removed by someone really in need of it. By this means they are cured of many diseases.

Some say that a shekhe is the grave of a descendant of an Imam. I once asked an old man sitting near a shekhe about its origin.

"My father heard from his father, who learned from our ancestors", he said, "that it is very old. It was here in the days of Mohammed the Prophet, and some

[191] Kurdish Lady. Taken in Kurdish dress. Turkish trousers, cut very full from a single width of cloth, a veil, knotted coins worn round a loose shirt under a fur coat, and a turban

[p. 9b (A)]

778 ...ere it was here long before then. It is called the *Stakke-i-Lori Ba* 'The Spring of the Wind'; in the time of my father's father a great plane-tree stood over it which was blown down by the wind. But then, as always before, when the tree is destroyed another springs up in its place —and that is the one you see there now."

778 In the religion of Zoroaster fire was
779 considered to be the agent which cleanses and purifies all things, and was regarded as the visible symbol of the God of Purity. Hence it was but a step to endow wood, as the producer of fire, and certain trees, with an atmosphere of sanctity. Thus certain large and solitary trees came to be regarded much as is the shrine of today. The Zoroastrians even hung pieces of cloth on the branches.

Zoroaster commanded that the dog
779 should be preserved and cared for by man even as one of his family; the shepherd looks to his dog for defence against wolves and other marauders. The Kurdish contempt of today, although prevented by his creed from ascribing the dog, still regards it as a useful ally, and almost a friend. In fact the *sanjy* a kind of shield used for hunting will remain a member of the household. The Kurd saves his Mohammedan conscience by saying that the *sanjy* is not a dog, and nowadays to call a man's *sanjy* his 'dog' is almost an insult.

781 The Kurds dislike killing dogs. Soon after the Great War army dogs in Sulaimaniya became such a nuisance that the Political Agent ordered them to be shot; it almost created a riot in the town, and police had to be called out!

137 Travelling among the tribes of Kurdistan one finds a great variety of dialects, but they have a common basic form throughout, especially in the grammar. There is also an affinity between Pushtu (spoken in Afghanistan) and Kurdish—too strong to be classed as a coincidence. Of the casual, or politically-biased, philologist, Pushtu and Kurdish are deep-

[p. 384(B)]
[illegible] continued on p 384(B)]